

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

Edelsberg - 343-5634

For Immediate Release

INTERIOR UNVEILS POTOMAC EXHIBIT AT NATIONAL AQUARIUM

A before-and-after exhibit emphasizing the need for a clean Potomac has been placed on display by the Department of the Interior at the National Aquarium in the Department of Commerce building.

It consists of two tanks: One shows the river as it flows by the Nation's Capitol today--dirty, with debris on a silt-laden bottom, an environment supporting few fish. The other depicts a "clean river" with a gravel bottom and game fish in clean water--one of the goals of an improvement plan.

President Johnson, in his Message on Natural Beauty, emphasized that the Potomac River should serve as a model of scenic and recreation values for the entire country. He instructed Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall to develop a plan to make the Potomac fit for fish, boating and swimming; protect its natural beauties by zoning, scenic easements and other measures; provide adequate recreational facilities, and complete the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Secretary Udall has asked the cooperation of all governing bodies in the Potomac Valley to develop the broadest agreement on how to use the basin's resources. He has met with the Governors and Members of Congress from the States involved. The four Federal Departments with primary planning responsibility for the Potomac Basin are Defense, Agriculture, Health, Education, and Welfare, and Interior.

An overall plan is being formulated that includes ways of handling water supply, water quality and flood control; new recreation and wildlife opportunities, and the applicability to the Potomac of the wild river concept.

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